Herbal preparations by Soviet scientists to cure cancer

769. SHRI SHAMIM HASHMI; Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news report which appeared in the Soviet Features of 28th June, 1989 regarding development of herbal preparations by a Siberian (Soviet) Scientist to cure cancer ;

(b) whether Government propose to obtain full information on the herbs for use in this country and for developing similar medicinal plants ; and

(c) whether similar herbs are available in India for treatment of cancer ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI RAFIQUE ALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is reported that the new preparation is still under development and required further clinical studies. Efforts are being made to obtain more details.

Bringing in accountability in research and development

770. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH , Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that our Research Development continues to be voguey instead of being need-based : if so, what corrective steps are proposed to be taken to bring about pragmatism in our system ; and

(b) whether an element of accountability would be brought in as a first step, scientists put in top most positions of honour and given full authority, alongwith responsibility instead of putting bureaucracy in charges, resulting in day to day interference and dependence ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN) ; (a) and (b) No, Sir.

Government is implementing need-based R&D efforts through mission-oriented programmes. Some examples of which are given below :—

(i) Department of Space has elaborate Space Application Programmes for Space meteorology, communications and for remote sensing for forest and wasteland mapping.

(ii) Department of Atomic Energy has R&D programme for nuclear power generation, production of radio isotopes for agricultural and medical purposes.

(iii) Department of Biotechnology has initiated S&T programmes for production of vaccines for the protection of our population against specific diseases.

(iv) Department of Science and Technology has initiated major programmes on Superconductivity, New Fibres and Composites, Instrumentation, Parallel Computing, etc. which have future potential of meeting our technological needs in sectors such as Energy, Health and Industrial Development, etc.